

The Story of America's Great Powder Trust; A Giant Monopoly Brought to Book

THE most recent victim of the present craze for legislative restriction of the capacity of the trusts is the great Du Pont powder monopoly of Delaware. During the present session of congress a vigorous effort to obtain legislation whereby the government may produce its own powder supply for the national defense is being made. It is such a popular thing nowadays to appear in the national capitol as a "trust buster" that there is little doubt that the proposed measure will become the law.

The man who precipitated this action was Robert S. Wadwell, president of the Buckeye Powder company of Peoria, Ill., who brought the matter before congress. He had excellent reasons for doing so. Those reasons were not especially philanthropic in their nature, but from an ordinary business standpoint they were sufficient. Being in the powder trade himself, Mr. Wadwell knew whereof he spoke, and he knew also that the Du Pont trust had obtained such a firm hold on the business of manufacturing powder that there was little chance for outside competitors.

All this Mr. Wadwell made known to congress. Incidentally, he made public certain matters which were vastly more interesting and of more importance to the general public. One of them related to the enormous profits which the trust is making out of Uncle Sam. The navy and war departments pay the Du Pont monopoly 70 cents a pound for all the powder the government consumes, and it can be and is manufactured at 30 cents. The profits of the trust have been fully \$2,500,000 per annum.

That is pretty bad, but it is not the worst. The country, it seems, is entirely dependent on one gigantic trust that has an absolute and exclusive monopoly of the manufacture of all the powder that the government requires for offensive and defensive use. Uncle Sam might, if he wished, build and equip four better plants than that owned by the trust at a cost not exceeding \$250,000 each, pay for them out of the profits extorted from the people in a single year and have more than \$1,000,000 remaining in the treasury. And now for the climax. After all its arrogant and successful domination, its power to prevent other capitalists from competing, its recent swelling of its capital from \$2,000,000 to \$50,000,000, it becomes apparent that in case of war this masterful company would be unable to supply the needs of the government. In spite of its grasping assumption of the office of sole provider it is actually incapable of manufacturing the material to be provided. This seems incredibly absurd, but its truthfulness has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the congressional committee appointed to investigate it.



According to Secretary Taft, there are on hand at the present time in the government magazines only 4,294,000 pounds of powder. The proper reserve of this material for the army and navy should be 35,000,000 pounds. It would require between twelve and thirteen years to collect this reserve with the present powder making facilities, even though the concern which has the government contracts were to work at its full capacity. In case of war Uncle Sam would find himself in an unpleasant pickle. He would be driven to the humiliating and very uncertain expedient of importing powder. The smokeless powder now in use in the United States requires a period of at least six months for manufacture. It is a complicated process involving the dis-

solving of gun cotton in ether and alcohol, and the gelatinous mass which results must be pressed into fragments and dried thoroughly—a matter demanding plenty of time.

The home of the powder trust is in Delaware. Some of the men at the head of it have been prominent in the state's industrial and political history for more than a quarter of a century. Both magnates, T. Coleman Du Pont and Henry Algernon Du Pont, his cousin, are great-grandsons of Pierre Samuel Du Pont de Nemours, the famous French economist and statesman who died in Delaware in 1817.

The Du Ponts have been a distinguished family in America for almost a century. For many years previous to that time they had been equally promi-

nent in France. Old Pierre Samuel, the founder of the American branch, was one of the leading social reformers of his day. About a century and a half ago he was promulgating economic theories in Paris that were not unlike some of the most advanced doctrines held by present day Socialists. Before he reached his thirtieth year he had written and published several works on this subject, and he also edited a

peace with Great Britain which recognized the independence of the United States.

But, although a reformer, M. Du Pont was conservative and had no quarrel with the idea of constitutional monarchy. He did not sympathize with the French revolution and only escaped the guillotine by the narrowest of chances. His home was burned and he considered himself fortunate to escape to America with his two sons, Victor and Eleuthere. Victor, the elder son, had been in the United States

for, while in hiding in the provinces, Eleuthere chanced to be living in the vicinity of the great government powder works. He became interested in the process and learned it from beginning to end. Having determined to begin the manufacture of powder in America, he returned to France as soon as the troubles were over and obtained models and machinery. Then in 1802 he bought a site on the Brandywine and began building a mill.

Du Pont was a success from the first in his novel undertaking. He produced a good and reliable explosive and his works became known all over the country for the uniform excellence of their output. In the course of time he added largely to his facilities for manufacturing and grew prosperous and even wealthy. He purchased a large estate along the Brandywine and acquired a handsome residence, which had been built by a rich merchant who had failed. Here he lived until his death in 1831. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Alfred, who built additional mills and enlarged the business greatly. Alfred died in 1850 and was succeeded by his brother Henry, who remained the head of the firm until 1889. At his death the business went into the capable hands of his nephew, Eugene Du Pont, who died in 1901 and was succeeded by his son, T. Coleman Du Pont, who is the present head.

But the most interesting living member of the Du Pont family is Henry Algernon, son of Henry, born in 1833 at Wilmington, Del., and educated at the United States Military academy. In 1861 he was graduated from West Point at the head of his class. He was in his twenty-second year, and he was appointed to the command of a light battery. His father, who was a veteran of 1812, was very proud of his handsome son and begged the privilege from Simon Cameron, then secretary of war, of supplying the troop with the best horses that money would buy. Thus mounted, the battery was the finest in the northern army. Captain Du Pont soon became the most famous artillery officer in the army. He was brevetted four times for gallantry and distinguished service, and when the war was over he had attained the rank of brigadier general.

When peace was declared, and not until then, Henry Algernon Du Pont hung up his sword and for the first time in his life began to show some interest in the great powder manufacturing industry of the Brandywine. Since 1873 he has taken an active part in the management, and his influence in the family councils is very potent. Almost all of the Du Ponts have had large families, seven being the usual complement and eleven the not infrequent exception. One of the numerous cousins married Dr. Coleman, the Episcopal bishop of Delaware.

GEORGE H. PICARD.

A WOODEN STATUETTE OF GENERAL WOLFE

The statuette of General Wolfe shown in the cut is now in the Quebec Historical museum. It was carved in wood in 1771 and has had an eventful history. In 1838 a party of sailors from the British warship *Incandescent* tore it from its niche at Palace and St. John



streets, Quebec, and carried it off to Halifax and afterward to England. The citizens of the quaint old Canadian city were indignant and demanded its return, but it was several years before the statuette was restored. Now it is kept under lock and key.

THE BIRD'S BEAK.
Tie a man's hands and arms tightly behind his back and tell him that he must find and prepare his food, build his home and perform all the business of life in a single position, what a pitiable object he would present. Yet this is not unlike what birds have to do. Almost every form of animal and vegetable life is used as food by one or another of the species; their most intricately built homes and their methods of defense must be maintained by the score; the care of their delicate plumage would alone seem to necessitate many and varied instruments, yet all this is done by its bill, or beak.

The beak of a parrot is a wonderful tool. Both its upper and lower mandibles are hinged to the bird's skull, thus giving great flexibility and freedom of movement. The long, pointed bill of the woodpecker serves its owner well for penetrating to the burrows of wood living insects. The study of birds' bills is an interesting hobby.

British Columbia promises to become a dangerous rival of Oregon as an apple growing region. During the past season 600,000 trees were planted.

BODY OF ALBERT RAINEY RECOVERED IN THE RIVER.

Special Correspondence.
MENAN, Idaho, April 25.—After weeks of fruitless searching and the abandonment of the work as hopeless, the body of Albert Rainey was found yesterday by accident by two residents here. As they were crossing the bridge which spans the river between here and Market Lake they saw the body coming down the stream. One of the men followed down the bank, keeping the body in sight while the other hurried on to Market Lake and, procuring a boat, rowed down the slough to its junction with the river and then to the river until they met the body. The funeral is to be held today. Deceased carries \$2,000 life insurance.

One of the most enjoyable socials ever held in this village was given last Friday evening in the church building by a committee of young people in honor of three young men, who will leave Salt Lake City today on missions to the northern states. Their names are Joseph Lawson, Frank Green and Z. Ballantyne, Jr. The building was packed to the doors with friends, members of the Church and non-members alike appearing equally pleased to extend the glad hand to the departing missionaries, and contributing a most sum to assist them on their way. The evening was spent in speeches, songs, recitations, and refreshments in the form of cake and ice cream, provided by the committee. All hands are in the midst of spring work which began later than usual this year. About 1,000 acres will be planted to sugar beets, some 400 of which will be by the Idaho Sugar Co., which has chosen this as a very promising field for operations. The soil is rich, sandy loam, and is very productive. A railroad spur and improved beet dump for unloading beets, have been installed.

There is an opening here for a music teacher and a shoemaker. Professor Kirkham has had two classes in vocal music here the past winter.

MEN PAST SIXTY IN DANGER.

More than half of mankind over sixty years of age suffer from kidney and bladder disorders, usually enlargement of prostate gland. This is both painful and dangerous, and Foley's Kidney Cure should be taken at the first sign of danger, as it corrects irregularities and has cured many old men of this disease. Mr. Rodney Burnett, Rock Port, Mo., writes: "I suffered with enlarged prostate gland and kidney trouble for years and after taking two bottles of Foley's Kidney Cure I feel better than I have for twenty years, although I am now 81 years old." Sold by F. J. Hill Drug Co.

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